



**U.S. Customs and
Border Protection**

March 8, 2022

**SUBJECT: El Paso Sector Proposed Remediation Actions Associated with the
Construction of Border Barrier**

To Whom It May Concern:

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is seeking your input on proposed remediation actions associated with the construction of border barrier in Luna and Doña Ana counties, New Mexico and El Paso County, Texas within U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) El Paso Sector.

As directed by the Secretary of Defense, all border barrier construction projects funded by Department of Defense have been canceled. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has been assessing the status and condition of border barrier project sites and working closely with the Department of the Interior to determine the scope and extent of remediation work. More information concerning the proposed remediation work in the El Paso Sector is included in the enclosed El Paso Sector Remediation Plan at: <https://www.cbp.gov/about/environmental-management>.

DHS intends to prioritize funding on those remediation projects that are needed to address life and safety, including the protection of the public, USBP agents, and nearby communities from potential harms, and avert further environmental damage or degradation.

CBP would like your feedback on the El Paso Sector Remediation Plan. Specifically, CBP is seeking input and information to the following questions:

- Are there any other immediate actions that are needed to address life and safety issues, including the protection of the public, USBP agents, and nearby communities from potential harms, and avert further environmental damage or degradation as a result of border barrier construction since 2019?
- What are the highest priority actions?
- Are there best practices the remediation contractor should follow when implementing these activities?

CBP is accepting comments until April 7, 2022. Comments can be submitted to CBP at ElPasoComments@cbp.dhs.gov. Please include "El Paso Remediation Plan Comments" in the subject of your email. Comments received by CBP, including names and addresses of those who comment, will become a part of the public record.

You may also provide comments, questions, or concerns by calling 1-800-542-2753 or by mail:

U.S. Customs and Border Protection
U.S. Border Patrol Headquarters
1300 Pennsylvania Ave. 6.5E Mail Stop 1039
Washington, D.C. 20229-1100

We appreciate your feedback and help with prioritizing potential remediation activities.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Paul Enriquez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" and last name "Enriquez" clearly distinguishable.

Paul Enriquez
Deputy Director Infrastructure Portfolio
Program Management Office Directorate
U.S. Border Patrol



El Paso Sector Border Barrier Remediation Plan

Background

On June 11, 2021, the Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) completed plans for the redirection of funds concerning the southern border barrier, as directed by Presidential Proclamation No. 10142. As directed by those plans, DoD has canceled all undertaken border barrier projects funded by 10 U.S.C. § 284 Counter Narcotics (DoD 284 projects), and DHS will not undertake any new border barrier construction on the former 284 projects.

On December 20, 2021, DHS authorized CBP to move forward with activities necessary to address life, safety, environmental and remediation requirements for the DoD 284 projects. The activities will be undertaken utilizing DHS Fiscal Year 2021 border barrier appropriations.

Since the termination of the DoD 284 projects, DHS has been working to implement the remediation component of its Plan, including assessing the statuses and conditions of the project sites to determine the scope and extent of remediation work. DHS intends to prioritize funding on those remediation projects needed to address life and safety, including the protection of the public, U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) agents, and nearby communities from potential harms, and avert further potential environmental damage or degradation. This plan summarizes the remediation activities anticipated in the USBP's El Paso Sector.

Project Location

Prior to the cancellation of the DoD 284 projects, there were approximately 102* miles of non-contiguous new border barrier planned for construction within the El Paso Sector. Segments located in New Mexico exist within the Roosevelt Reservation. An overview of the DoD 284 project segments can be found at: <https://www.cbp.gov/about/environmental-management>.

Proposed Activities

In the USBP El Paso Sector project segments identified in the attached maps, remediation activities will include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Erosion control measures: Short-term and long-term erosion control measures will include installation of rip rap and other embankment/slope stabilization along slopes and drainages.
2. Completion of safety work on border and access roads: Work will include slope paving and associated erosion control in areas with steep slopes. Roads through Federal lands will be repaired or restored in accordance with previously established agreements with Federal land managers. CBP will work with USBP and other relevant agencies to determine which construction roads will be retained and which will be decommissioned. In some areas, the roadbed has been risen along the border so that a four foot drop off was left between the border wall and road's edge. Railings will be added in these areas for safety. In addition, trenches were left along the alignment which will be filled. Finally, extra materials and excess soil piled along the alignment will be cleared.



3. Revegetation of disturbed areas: Remediation will include reseeding staging areas and vehicle turn-arounds in accordance with the specifications provided by Federal land managers.
4. Drainage completion and/or repair: All drainage crossings will be protected by appropriate measures such as, but not limited to, articulated concrete block, concrete pavement, inlets/outlets, culverts, roadside ditches, debris posts, or a combination thereof.
5. Implementation of Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and Best Management Practices: Activities will include removal of sediment from drainages, removal of temporary structures from waterways, and installation of wattle and silt fencing to prevent accumulation of sediment in waterways.
6. Gap closure and gate installation: These gaps include incomplete migrant rescue gates and incomplete vehicle gates and associated foundation work. Incomplete gates create a security vulnerability to agent safety and without a complete operable gate providing close ingress or egress, Border Patrol agents are unable to leave and respond to a threat. In addition, there is a need to complete top lift of concrete on vehicle gate foundations.
7. Backfilling and grading of retention ponds: All retention ponds across the project areas will be filled so that drainage is restored to its natural flow path.
8. Bollards capped: Bollards will be capped.

More detailed information concerning the proposed remediation activities, including proposed project locations, can be found at: <https://www.cbp.gov/about/environmental-management>.

Proposed Schedule

Beginning in March 2022, CBP will hold a 30-day comment period to collect input and information from the public on this El Paso Sector Remediation Plan. Feedback from the public will be reviewed and incorporated into direction to the contractors or formal contract modifications. Following the comment period, CBP will award remediation contracts and work is estimated to begin as soon as 30–60 days following awards. It is anticipated that remediation work will take approximately 12–28 months.

**Updated September 2022.*